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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/685,912	10/15/2003	William Fiehler	47563.0011	6302

57600 7590 12/21/2006  
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EXAMINER

POUS, NATALIE R

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3731

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	12/21/2006	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/685,912

Applicant(s)

FIEHLER ET AL.

Examiner

Natalie Pous

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 October 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/25/06 12/29/03  
11/25/05

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Objections***

Claim 35 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 35 as written depends from claim 3. It is inferred that the correct dependency is claim 35 depends from claim 31. Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 3 and 39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kensey et al. (US 5222974).

Regarding Claim 1, Kensey teaches a tissue puncture closure device for partial insertion into and sealing of an internal tissue wall puncture comprising: a filament (34) extending from a first end of the closure device to a second end of the closure device; an anchor (32) for insertion through the tissue wall puncture attached to the filament at the second end of the closure device; a sealing plug (30) slidably attached to the filament adjacent to the anchor (fig. 20); an automatic driving mechanism (142) for automatically tamping or cinching the sealing plug toward the second end upon withdrawal of the closure device from the internal tissue wall puncture (fig. 23).

Regarding Claim 2, Kensey teaches the device of claim 1, further comprising a tamping tube (130) disposed adjacent to the sealing plug (fig. 22); wherein the tamping tube is driven by the automatic driving mechanism (142) to tamp the sealing plug (fig. 23).

Regarding Claim 3, Kensey teaches the device of claim 2, wherein the automatic driving mechanism (142) comprises a transducer (142A) for effecting a tamping force on the sealing plug upon withdrawal of the closure device from the tissue wall puncture.

Regarding Claim 39, Kensey teaches a method of sealing a tissue puncture in an internal tissue wall accessible through a percutaneous incision comprising: providing a tissue puncture closure device comprising a filament (34) connected at its distal end to an anchor (32) and to a sealing plug located proximal of the anchor for disposition and anchoring about the tissue puncture; inserting the tissue puncture closure into the percutaneous incision (fig. 15); deploying the anchor (fig. 19); withdrawing the closure device from the percutaneous (fig. 20); automatically tamping the sealing plug toward the anchor end upon withdrawal of the closure device from the internal tissue wall puncture (fig. 23).

Claims 1, 14, 31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nash et al. (US 5662681).

Regarding Claim 1, Nash teaches a tissue puncture closure device for partial insertion into and sealing of an internal tissue wall puncture comprising: a filament (34) extending from a first end of the closure device to a second end of the closure device;

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an anchor (32) for insertion through the tissue wall puncture attached to the filament at the second end of the closure device; a sealing plug (30) slidably attached to the filament adjacent to the anchor (fig. 2); an automatic driving mechanism (36) for automatically tamping or cinching the sealing plug toward the second end upon withdrawal of the closure device from the internal tissue wall puncture (fig. 3).

Regarding Claim 14, Nash teaches the device of claim 1, wherein the filament extends at least partially back toward the proximal end and re-engages the seal plug (fig. 2).

Regarding Claim 31, Nash teaches a method of sealing a puncture in an internal tissue wall accessible through a percutaneous incision, comprising; withdrawing a closure device from the tissue puncture; automatically transducing a motive force generated by withdrawal of the closure device in a first direction to a cinching or tamping force in a second direction (Column 7, proximate lines 28-36).

Regarding Claim 32, Nash teaches the method of claim 31, further comprising applying the tamping force in the second direction to a sealing plug (30).

### ***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir.

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1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-39 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of copending Application Nos. 11/130895, 11/130688, 11/103730, 11/103257 and 11/103196.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they relate to the same inventive concept, that being a tissue puncture closure device comprising a filament, an anchor, a sealing plug and an automatic driving mechanism for automatic tamping, including a transducer, a spool, a gear, a torque limiting clutch etc.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

### **Conclusion**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Natalie Pous whose telephone number is (571) 272-6140. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:30pm, off every 2nd Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anhtuan Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-4963. The fax phone

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number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

NRP  
11/29/06

  
**ANH TUAN T. NGUYEN**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**

*12/8/06*